



THE GAY TYROLIERS

An Austrian group from the village Kitzbuehl, nestling in the Tyrolian Alps, are touring the United States. They consist of ten young men and four young ladies, under the direction of Toni Praxmair. We highly recommend them to you and if they are within reach, SEE THEM! They are the most delightful, the most refreshing and the most genuine thing seen in ages. A pure, true and an unadulterated folk group. Many of our folk dance groups who love to pervert and shmaltz up dances, particularly at programs, could reap a lesson from them that when a thing is presented in its genuine sincerity one will not have to depend on airs, mannerism and prisiadkies. They danced as if the stage never existed, but in the midst of their own and for their own pleasure. There was that healthy "hulyeh" spirit, the love of fun which captivated the audience. They moved like delightful spirits, their songs were of pleasing harmonies and their yodeling brought the Alps in our midst.

They did thirty three numbers, too many to describe. Everyone of their Plattler dances, of which there were plenty, was perfect and slapped in unison. It would be hard to chose the "best number", all were beyond reproach, but some were impressive, such as the Kanppentanz (Dance of the Mountain Miners), believed to be 500 years old, Der Stelzentanz, done grotesquely on stilts, also from the middle ages, when the stilted men, during the spring, tried to chase out the spirit of winter from their land; Der Watschenplattler, a rough and funny boxing and wrestling type of a plattler; Der Holzhacker, a wood choppers plattler.

Of the songs, the Archduke Johann and Das Jodele, both solos, had some superb yodeling performed by lovely frauleins, while Das Dengellied—a song of scythe hammering and love for their women mowers, and Heut Gehn Ma Auf Die Alma, which describes life and the noises of the farm, was delightfully funny as was their Kuhstutenmuch a cow milking song sung by the men.

Beaucoup Hulyeh in Corvallis

On Friday night (Oct. 1) the Episcopal church young people invited the Lutheran college students to a folk dance party and asked me to lead it. I planned a dance trip around the world, choosing easy-to-learn dances from each country. Some of the students had folk dancing but most of them had not. They liked all the dances, especially the mixers and wanted to repeat so many of them that we did not finish the trip. There was beaucoup Hulyeh that night! I like the idea. It is a real thrill to see all those young people enjoying folk dancing.

Hildred Rice, Corvallis, Oregon

INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE FESTIVAL, L.A.

During October 9-10 the International Institute of Los Angeles presented their annual folk festival to an audience of hundreds who crowded every nook of the charming building. At close intervals programs, demonstrated by ethnic groups, were presented in the patio and the garden from the afternoon until 10:00 P.M. While various nationality groups had also rooms exhibiting their native folk crafts. Among the exhibitors were the Finns and the Scandinavian nations, Latvia, "Imperial" Russia, Poland, China, and others. Another hall was set aside for refreshments and delicacies from many lands. Crowds were milling everywhere.

Of the programs presented the Lithuanian folk dancers of Lucille Zaikis who performed Kubilas, Lenciūgėlis and the Grand Mill, did a most praiseworthy job. The Lithuanian Church Choir under the direction of Mr. Budriūnas likewise did a magnificent job. Most enjoyable were also the Austrian Mountain Dancers. (Dir. Chas. Bausback). Their Schuhplattler was a joy to watch. Unique in style and pattern were the dances of the Latvians who did three numbers, Sēdancis, Magais Dancis, Perkonis. Rose Lee, the petite Korean dancer in her strange costume, performed daintily in the equally strange type of Korean dance to the accompaniment of a drum played by her mother. The Japanese girls in richly designed Kimonos and with fans, performed in unison poetic movements, so typical of Japanese dancing. A Polish group (Ampol) performed vigorously and creditably a mountaineer dance and the Bialy Mazur. Many groups were scheduled for both days to sing and dance, I but saw the evening performance, each group doing their best to a receptive audience who appreciated every little act presented to them. All in all, the festival was quite successful.

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KOLO FEDERATION OF AMERICA

The Kolo Federation, organized in January 1951 for the promotion of native folk dancing among the American born of Yugoslav extraction, held their quarterly meeting on Sunday, Oct. 24th, in East Pittsburgh. The delegates agreed to begin a teachers training program for the teaching of kolos. Those interested contact Mrs. Charlene Vukela, 4803 Mooney Rd., Homestead, Pa., and Louise Sasek, 1129 Addison Rd., Cleveland 3, Ohio.

The Kolo Federation will also sponsor their annual Christmas party on Dec. 11th at Paule's Lookout in East Pittsburgh, Pa. The next quarterly meeting of the Kolo Federation will be held at the South Slavic Workers' Hall of East Pittsburgh. (Louise Sasek).

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UKRAINIAN U. CLUB HOSTS FOLK COUNCIL

A meeting of the temporary committee for the formation of Folk Festival Council was held on Nov. 18, at 7:00 P.M., at Columbia University, Fayerweather Lounge, 117th St., and Amsterdam Ave., New York City. The Ukrainian University Club of Columbia was the host group.

The purposes of the Folk Festival Council is to foster interest in the folk dances, songs, and other expressions of the folk culture of the ethnic and national groups among the American people; to preserve the folk arts in their authentic forms; to encourage participation in and enjoyment of the folk arts and to keep them alive as a vital part of our community life; for these purposes to bring together interested individuals and groups in a non-partisan, non-sectarian organization. Sixty groups within the New York Metropolitan area received invitations.

WILLIAM DEIKE

Chairman, Folk Dance Group
of the Cosmopolitan Club,
Montclair, N. J.

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INTERNATIONAL BALL OF DAYTON, OHIO

By Michael Solomon

The first international ball of Dayton was the brainchild of one of our nationality folk dancers. Carol Tarnowski, leader of a Polish dance group. At the conclusion of an outdoor folk festival we held last summer at Island Park, where 150 dancers representing 10 nationality groups entertained an audience of 3,000 — several of us felt it was a pity that those 3,000 spectators had to play a passive

role. We thought how wonderful it would be if an affair could be arranged where everyone who attended had the opportunity to participate. Tarnowski, who had had experience with this sort of thing in Europe, suggested the ball. The only suitable place available was the Biltmore Hotel ballroom, and a tamburitza orchestra was imported from Youngstown, Ohio, about 200 miles away. Several of us were concerned about the expense, the admission we would have to charge to make out, and the location, feeling that an affair based on folk-dancing should not take place in an ornate setting like a hotel ballroom. However, in spite of our misgivings, we went ahead with the arrangements. The ball was held on Beggar's Night, October 29. The program consisted of three parts: 1) general ballroom dancing; 2) folk dance exhibitions during intermissions; 3) mixer and circle dances in which everyone was encouraged to enter. Four of the nationality groups served their native foods: Polish, Hungarian, Lebanese, and Lithuanian. The mayor, the city manager, and other prominent officials were guests of honor.

Since this was our first venture of the kind, many of us were seriously concerned about how the ball would be received. From the standpoint of attendance, participation, and public reaction—it was a tremendous success.

Mayor Henry Stout wrote a thank-you note to the chairman of the ball the next day expressing his delight and remarking that he had never seen so many people having such a wonderful time in such a wholesome manner. The ballroom, which normally accommodates 600 people, was packed with almost 700. What especially delighted the committee was the crowd's response to the circle dances and mixers. There were many people there who had never seen or experienced folk dancing of any kind. When they got out and took part in such dances as Pleskovac Kole, Miserlou, and Tra-la-la-la Ya-Saa, one could see that it was simply a unique and delightful experience for them.

Yes, there will be a second International Ball: we are already planning for it, and if we have the accommodations, it will be much bigger and better than the one first.

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ČIURLIONIS ENSEMBLE IN CHICAGO

By Len Mickas

Chicago's leading Lithuanian newspaper, Naujienos, brought the wonderful Čiurlionis Ensemble to the Sokol Hall for a concert long to be remembered. Much time has passed since the last appearance of this group here and the packed auditorium showed that we are still fond of their singing, dancing and playing of the Kanklės. Under the expert direction of Mr. Mikulskis the Ensemble presented well rendered songs of old and new. The more recent told of their earnest hopes for the liberation of their country.

Announcement of the selections was done in English by a young lady that put a bit too much feeling into her recitations. Dances were few and well done. It was nice seeing what their versions of familiar dances were. Šustas, Blezdgingėlė, and Malūnėlis.

The versatility of the Kanklės was well presented when used alone, with soloists, and with the whole group. It will be pleasant to spend another evening with them and as Longfellow stated in "A Day Is Done,"

"And the night shall be filled with music
And the cares that infest the day,
Shall fold their tents like the Arabs
And as silently steal away."

4TH FIESTA DE LA CAUDRILLIA

Once again San Diego held a square dance fiesta in lovely Balboa Park during October 15 and 17. It seems thousands converged and every hall in the convention area was occupied by gaily dressed and happy people. Many "name" leaders in the square and round dance fields taught at institutes and called at the various halls where the dancing was going on with packed participants.

Women's styles are becoming more and more dainty and close to the ballet skirts, short, multi-pettycoated and of eye-pleasing shades, mostly on the pastel side. To complete the ballet picture, ala Degas, all women wore ballet slippers, too. It is a far cry from the original American Square Dance garb, of the ugly mother-hubbard type of calico prints. Now it is mostly voile and other fineries. The men, too, are developing a new style. Less and less levis and jeans with plaid shirts, but more and more gaudy shirts and gaudy boots, of the cowboys, ties of hues to match milady's dress and sweat-towels of shades to match the ties. Some of the male shirts surpassed in beauty and richness of design anything women wore.

It was also very commendable to note that on the rostrum there were (for the first time to my knowledge) Negro callers and negro dancers. One Negro lass did some marvelous calling. For the inclusion of them VILTIS extends a "Bravo".

There were two Cavalcades. Saturday afternoon the youngsters, from six to seventeen, presented a series of dances. All were very cute. Some did well and others did much better, even much better than some of the adult demonstrators on the following afternoon. The Cavalcades of the adults, was rather poor, much poorer than their presentation the previous year. There were two particularly good and better than good presentations.

The very last number, Roulette Wheel, by a group of 64 dancers trained and called by Buzz Brown, was quite spectacular. Buzz has a folk dance background and attended several camps in Stockton. This is evidenced in his broad knowledge for figure and spectacle. Many figures resembled some of the Lithuanian Malūnas (Mill Dance). His voice for calling is also quite pleasant to the ear. Seeing Stars by three sets under the direction of Van Vander Walker, was also of good caliber. The Country Dance (Maria Fielding) was good but it was missnamed and misleading. It should have been called a "Novelty Presentation" and as such there would be no criticism. Country Dance as we all know, is either a peasant type of dance or an English Folk Dance. It didn't say from which country it was and it looked like no country dance ever did. Three couples doing (tho, well done, at that), some fancy ballet, adagio, tango, waltz movements with mannerism, hand waving and lifts, and dressed in black and white on the order of the expressionistic dancers. Style and Decorum and the Family Square were two numbers on the comic side which were successfully presented. There was a weak attempt to present flavor of regionalism, but I fear that their conception of how dancing is done in the other parts of the U. S. is a bit muddled.

In annual affairs of such "Magnitude", to present a number is quite important, and it is even more important to know what one presents. Programs, unlike parties where you come for a good time, are for review and open for criticism. There stage is neither a rehearsal hall nor a dance hall, but a place where you are present to demonstrate the best and truest forms.

However, the thing that counted most (pushing aside the cavalcade) was the fact that some 4,000 participants of every age, had a wonderful time, dancing, seeing friends, meeting new friends, exchanging ideas and deriving new inspirations. Happy Twirling!